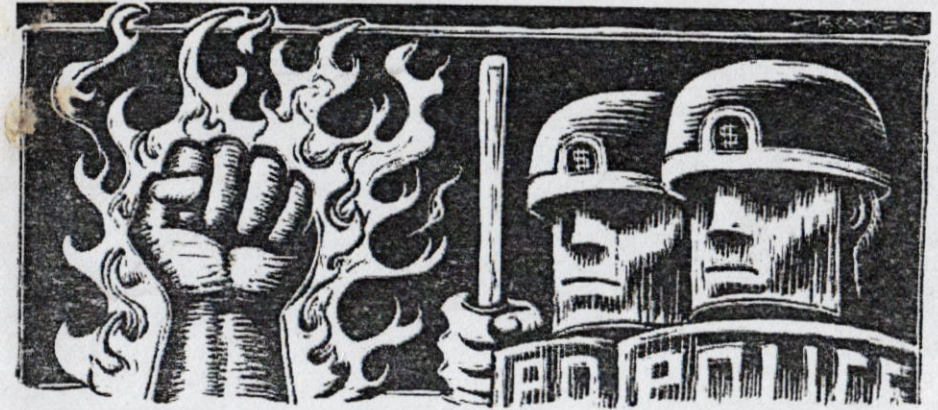




NO ON PROP. 21

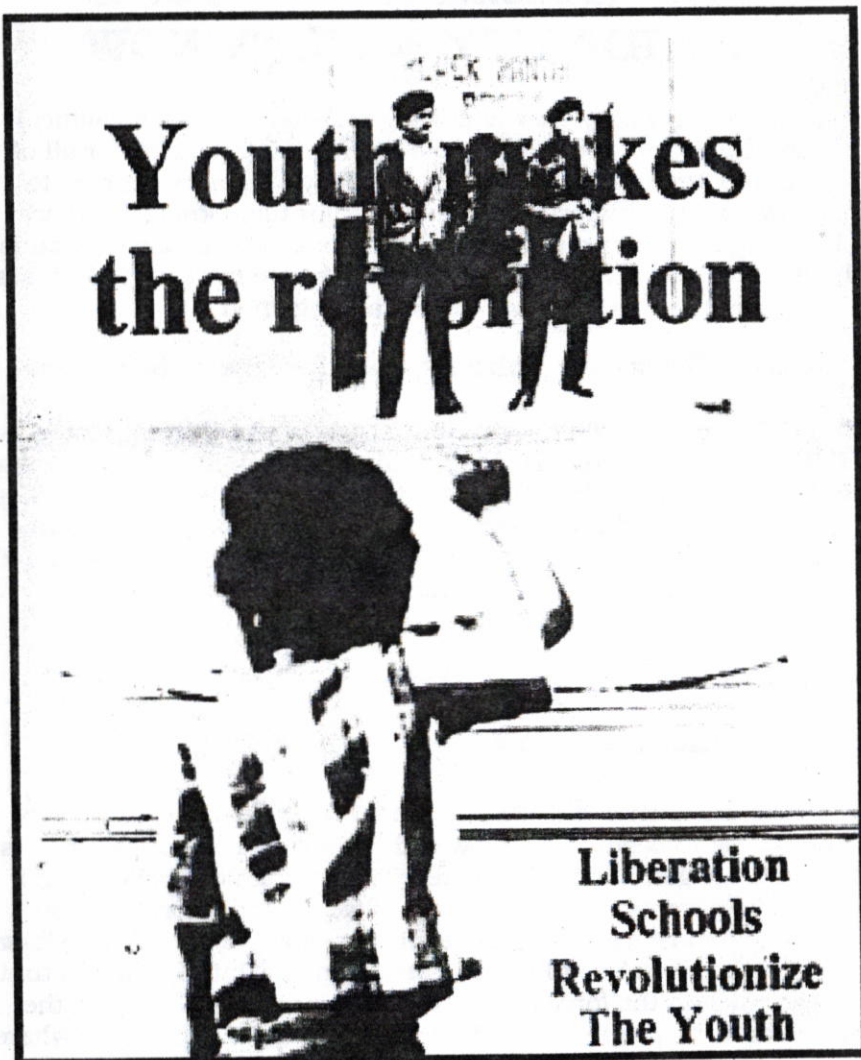
PROP. 21 LOWERS FELONY VANDALISM LIKE GRAFFITI FROM OVER \$50,000 TO OVER \$400 IN DAMAGES AND INCREASES THE MINIMUM PENALTY TO 1 YEAR IN JAIL AND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN FINES.

www.SchoolsNotJails.com



Solidarity

Solidarity: the alliance of oneself with others in order to prevent the destruction of less powerful groups or individuals.



Introduction

**"Revolution is thought put into action"-
Emma Goldman**

This is the first publication of Solidarity. This publication is being brought into the community to press issues that are being neglected and that demand all of our attention. We see the need to build a powerful and sustainable alliance of all people devoted to global, domestic, racial, gender, and environmental justice.

We see the necessity for all people of the U.S. and the world to join hands and begin to curtail and fight this mad dog system that has and continues to enslave and destroy all life on the planet.

Property More Important Than Human Life?

By Jesse Heckman

On November 9th 1999, Demetrious Davis, a 38yearold black man from KCMO was in Osco Drug on the corner of Westport and main streets. While in the store Demetrious was accused of shoplifting. Shortly after an argument ensued between Demetrious and four white males that worked for Osco. The off duty police officer that was working, as a security guard in the store did nothing to intervene.

As Demetrious left the store, the four Osco employees chased him to the ground with their bodies. There were numerous pleas from the crowd that had gathered to let him go because it was clear that he could not breathe. When KCMO police arrived at the scene Demetrious was already dead. The police handcuffed his dead body and set him up on the street as they waited for the ambulance to arrive.

The four murders from Osco were right in front of the police yet they did nothing. Demetrious was accused of stealing from the store but there was no stolen item on his body when the police arrived. This is a clear case of state sanctioned murder. The security guard at Osco could have stopped this from happening if he had intervened at the beginning. WE must hold Osco responsible for their racist and murderous employees.

Join the protest for justice in the murder of Demetrious Davis, EVERY SATURDAY AT ONE O'CLOCK, INFRONT OF OSCO DRUG ON MAIN. LONG LIVE THE STRUGGLE!!! JUSTICE FOR OUR BROTHER DEMERIOUS!!!

Where My Sisters At?

By Ailecia Ruscin

Where are the radical queers and feminists? I moved to Lawrence, KS in August of 1999 because I saw that my skills, as an activist, could be utilized while I began graduate work at the University of Kansas. Lawrence seemed like a liberal utopia that I could feel comfortable living in. In the ten months I've lived here, I have found little radical feminist or radical queer undertakings. But I can't say I have been exactly looking either.



As an activist, I've always focused on social justice issues that didn't necessarily directly include issues of gender equality and sexual liberation. Queer and feminist issues had always been present in my mind, mainly because I attended a liberal women's college for four years: where feminism was the norm and half the campus was queer. Regardless, most of my involvement had been on issues of environmentalism, freedom for political prisoners, and bad U.S. foreign policy. The women and queer activism came in the form of regular lectures and meetings on my liberal campus.

LIBERATION SCHOOLS

-PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE- SOLIDARITY & UNITY NOW

Solidarity & Unity Now is putting together a series of political teach-ins called, Liberation Schools. We think it's vital for all of us, who are fighting for freedom and revolutionary change, to know our true history. It is important for us to know where we are going as a movement and to begin looking critically at what is happening today. We need to know as a social force just what it is we are fighting for and against!

What: Liberation Schools -Past, Present & Future-

We will be reading **The People's History of the United States** by Boston Univ. professor Howard Zinn. This book fills in the blanks our history books left out and starts to shed some light on the lies our teachers told us. We will be meeting once a week to discuss the chapters we've read. We will also have guest speakers, show documentaries and visit area galleries and museums to supplement our reading.

Where: Downtown KC, MO

When: Starting The Week of July 17th

Why: Because Knowledge is Power! It is important for the people to begin to strip away the layers of mis-education, lies and propaganda we all have received through our schools, the media, parents and U.S. society. If we are to be serious about building a movement for justice for all people we are going to have to educate ourselves to become strong intelligent individuals that can take on the forces that are oppressing and destroying the earth and the people on it. More importantly we can't know where we're going if we don't know where we've been!

Educate to Liberate!

If you want to be involved in this project call (816) 842-7088 or email SUN_org@hotmail.com to reserve your copy of the book. Books are \$15 each. If you cannot participate based on lack of funds, don't worry, call us, don't let this stand in your way. All other materials will be provided.

Book Review

LIVE FROM DEATH ROW

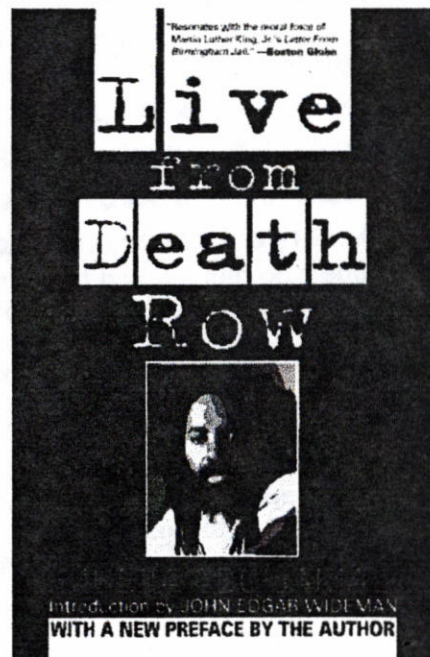
"A rare and courageous voice speaking from a place we fear to know: Mumia Abu-Jamal must be heard." — Alice Walker

"Everyone interested in justice should read the words of this innocent man." — William M. Kunstler

Mumia Abu-Jamal may be the most celebrated death row inmate in America. In 1982 he was convicted and sentenced to death for the murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Since then, from his cell on Pennsylvania's death row, he has been on the forefront of the crusade against racism and political bias in the American judicial system. His scheduled commentaries for National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* caused such controversy that they were abruptly canceled. NPR's decision generated outrage and sparked nationwide debates about censorship, capital punishment, and Abu-Jamal's right to speak out.

In his first book of prison writings, Abu-Jamal includes the unreleased NPR commentaries. *Live from Death Row* is an unflinching account of the brutalities, humiliations, and atrocities of prison life — the full body-cavity searches before each visit, the smell of charred flesh from a fellow inmate who can take no more of "the hole" and burns himself to death, the outrage of a young daughter who, because of enforced separation by glass during visits, has not touched her father in twelve years. It is also an eloquent examination of the death penalty and a powerful call for justice by a man — unlike any of the others who have written on the subject — who has the most to lose.

Before his conviction, Mumia Abu-Jamal covered many pressing issues from police brutality and corruption (that was later confirmed by the U.S. Justice Department) to community development and culture as a radio reporter in Philadelphia and was president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists. His writings have been published in *The Nation* and the *Yale Law Review*. He is a former Black Panther and supporter of MOVE.



My activism began with the Student Environmental Action Coalition, based out of Philly, that was quick to point out the interconnectedness of all forms of oppression. The oppression of the earth, women, people of color, queers, the poor, and animals is completely connected. The oppression that exists is created from the same structure. In SEAC we focused national campaigns on all sorts of issues that most people didn't necessarily define as "environmental." SEAC broadened the definition of "environment" to include all these oppressed groups and helped expand my mind to view all forms of oppression as equally worth fighting for.

Well indoctrinated in this ideology, I moved to Lawrence, KS. Then a week before the People's Rally I realized we hadn't invited any radical feminist or queer groups. As a queer radical feminist, who was also an organizer for the People's Rally, even I forgot to include this segment of the activist population in the People's Rally. So I immediately got on the Internet to start some last minute networking. The People's Rally came and went as a huge success. The event was amazing. Over 300 people gathered together to take back our streets and exercise our rights to free speech. Looking back my only regret is waiting so long to contact feminist and queer groups.

So where are the women and queers hiding? Sure, many of us at the people's rally were women and many of us were queer, but these issues were not addressed by speakers and literature tables. How can we get together and organize? Maybe I have just missed flyers for these types of groups. Get in touch with this publication to let us know about your upcoming events and how people can get in touch with you. Until I find these groups I want to see a little restructuring in the current activist groups I participate in.

I am about to talk about some subjects that many people will get defensive about. Please don't. Allow me, as a woman, to address issues that I think should be looked at with all defenses down. I'm not pointing fingers. At activist meetings, political discussions, workshops, and radio shows, I have seen a trend of men doing most of the talking. In Communication classes in college, I learned that gender inequalities have caused many women to adopt communication styles that leave them unheard. The women who fight their way into conversation are viewed as "butch" or aggressive. It is for this reason that I feel many women remain voiceless in activist meetings. I think an appropriate way to address this topic is awareness. Facilitation techniques can be used that will not only help structure conversations, but will also

make sure both sexes are represented and heard. The way I've seen most meeting run have been open dialogues where the most aggressive person gets to speak. This leaves the less aggressive or quieter or shyer persons out of the conversation. We must share this space to hear all of our unique diverse voices.

I think it is very possible for women and queers to get involved in current social justice groups. We can establish facilitation styles that make sure all people are heard. As my own personal critique of the queer community: I say, **Act Up. Fight Back**

Let's get out of the bars and into the streets. I know not all of us want to get equal rights just so we can blend in and become a "healthy" member of a society that oppressed us and others to begin with. **Let's be here and queer and fight against capitalism.** I say to the ladies, Women, let's unite and join in the conversation. Let's show the brothers that we are taking power for ourselves to become active vocal members of the groups we have been working so hard with. And to the supportive men and heterosexuals: we need your support. Look at your own inherent sexism and homophobia that exists despite your own political consciousness. We are all raised in a system of oppression that takes conscious efforts to dismantle, even within our own aware bodies.

I know that the people's movement in Kansas City is brewing. If we join together on all fronts and fight against all form of oppression, we can make this a sustainable and successful movement for social justice. **As the great Martin**

Luther King, Jr. said, A threat to justice

anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere.

Let's get out there and fight as a united group of diverse people.

-Ailecia Ruscin writes a personal and political zine called alabama grrrl and can be reached at P.O. Box 297 Lawrence KS, 66044 or ailecia@hotmail.



- Anyone who threatens, attempts, or conspires to damage a structure that is in whole or partly owned by any department or government association will be imprisoned for up to 25 years. (Even if the attempt is never acted upon!)
- And the list goes on...

And the Point Is...

In all fairness it can be argued that there is a necessity for guidelines on how to deal with an individual or group that beyond any reasonable doubt intends to or does harm to anyone. Nevertheless, broad laws that have the ability to strip away constitutional rights and civil liberties from all, to "protect" us from the potential few is obviously not the answer.

It must be understood that within the 300+ pages of this new law dealing with "terrorism and counter-terrorism", over half of which is speaking of at-home terrorism, not once is the word "terrorist" defined.

The FBI's definition of an act of terrorism is basically this: anyone who harms or attempts to harm anyone for "political or social" reasons has committed an act of terrorism. Passing laws that are built on a house of cards, as this is, should be seen for what it is: a danger if not a direct assault on all of our supposed constitutional rights. By not clearly defining who "the enemy" of these laws are. **Any protestor, activist, organizer, or person standing in opposition to the U.S. power structure could easily be labeled a terrorist and sentenced as such.** As anyone who has studied true American history should know, whenever there has been a loophole in the law allowing abuses of authority it has been exploited. By allowing this to continue the next time around "the enemy" might just be you!

Sources:

- www.congress.org
prepardness against terrorism act of 2000
anti-terrorism act of 96'
- Terrorist resource center website
- Article: By John Hachette, Gannett news service

students, activities, academic performance and even change in majors.

- Giving power to U.S. military instead of FBI or F.E.M.A. (the org which handles natural or manmade disasters) as the prime responder to any "terrorist attack on U.S. soil." This would start marshal law under any circumstance considered a "terrorist act".
- Create a department in the Treasury Dept. that does nothing but track "terrorist" fund raising.
- Allows the U.S. to use sanctions against nations we are normally on good terms with. This gives the U.S. power to control other countries' domestic policy.

Justifications?

The chairman of the proposed law justifies this by stating that "the FBI and CIA have not been pro-active enough in their intelligence gathering." Former CIA director James Woolley, retired army general Wayne Downing, and vice chairman of the president's intelligence advisory board Maurice Sonneberg are also sitting on the panel as writers of this proposed law.

This group knows a thing or two about how this new law may step on some of our Constitutional rights. Sonnenberg confirmed this by stating, "The balance between intelligence (gathering) and personal privacy is a delicate one. We're not recommending any abridgement of civil liberties." Many who have had access to the document in full disagree! Joseph A. Morris, an ex-Reagan cabinet official, stated that with this proposed law "we are seeing a cure which is worse than the disease."

The law that paved the road for the current plan, the antiterrorism act of 1996, has many items that demand much concern. Just in case you didn't personally have a chance to review the 100+ page law here are some highlights you may find startling:

- A person living in the U.S. with a visa who is on trial as a "terrorist" can not suppress any evidence, even if it was obtained illegally.
- A "terrorist" has the right to be told of the charges against him/her unless a release of the charges/information would pose "a threat to national security". (In other words a person can be held indefinitely without knowing why they have been jailed. also making it impossible to build a defense.)

police repression in fascist amerikkka by kurt lane

People who partake in acts of civil disobedience know full well the repercussions of their actions. In this country that includes heavy fines and the very real possibility of facing jail time for challenging absolute State power. Clark Kissinger and ninety-five other activists, including Frances Goldin (Mumia Abu-Jamal's literary agent), who staged a political protest at the Liberty Bell last summer expected a heavy-handed response from the judicial system and that's exactly what they got.

Initially all ninety-six people were issued summons by Park Rangers in Philadelphia for 'failing to obey a lawful order' to disperse. This summons is a 'petty offense'-about the equivalent of a traffic infraction. Kissinger, along with several others, refused to pay the fine and instead asked for a trial to present their case. U.S. federal courts have denied them their right to a trial and, in addition to the fine, placed them under a one-year supervised probation. The terms of the probation are as follows:

- For one year, Kissinger cannot leave his New York district with out his probation officer's permission.
- He must report all contact with persons who have a criminal record (i.e. Mumia Abu-Jamal. Kissinger is an organizer of National Leadership Conferences for Mumia, as well as a legal expert on his case).
- He must provide a list of all clubs and organizations to which he belongs (such as being on the National Council of Refuse and Resist).
- He must report all monthly earnings and spendings.
- He must surrender his passport.
- He must allow visits to his home and office by probation officers.
- He is required to be employed at a 'regular' job. (i.e. no full time activist work and legal advising for Mumia).
- Finally, his wife must turn over their financial records for the last ten years and testify before a grand jury.

Keep in mind this is for an offense that bears the same punishment as a standard speeding ticket.

The implications of this bullshit probation are obvious. People who speak out against injustices in the United States will be targeted for doing so. Dissenting voices are silenced by a biased court system and outdated electoral political base. Kissinger's case is not an isolated occurrence. This is happening everywhere, including Kansas City, as can be seen with the People's Rally. This is not a matter of a couple corrupt officials and judges; it is the trademark of the hegemony of capitalist 'democracy', the United States.

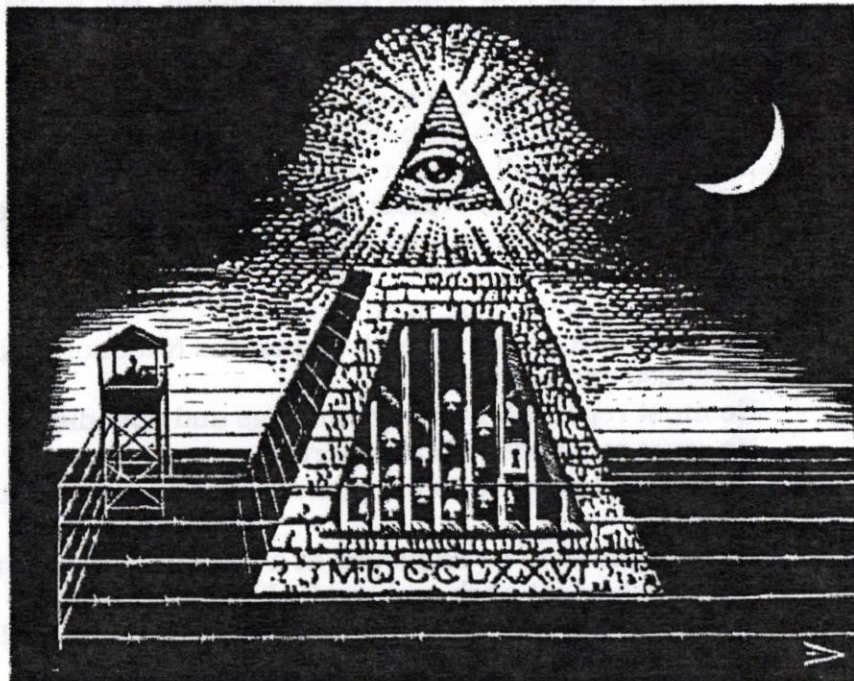
Kurt Lane can be reached at actionpacked@hotmail.com.

Sources:

www.refuseandresist.org

www.zmag.org

www.nytimes.org



Enemy of the State

By Justin Betterton

A meeting of the U.S. Congress assembled in January to write a report dealing with terrorism and counter-terrorism in America. This report is a hopeful extension of the 1996 "Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act".

The 64 page "official report" is named the "Preparedness Against Terrorism Act of 2000" and was delivered to Bill Clinton at the White House on June 5th. It encourages stronger roles by the CIA, FBI and the Pentagon. And recommendations on preventing/ reacting to a "a terrorist attack in the U.S."

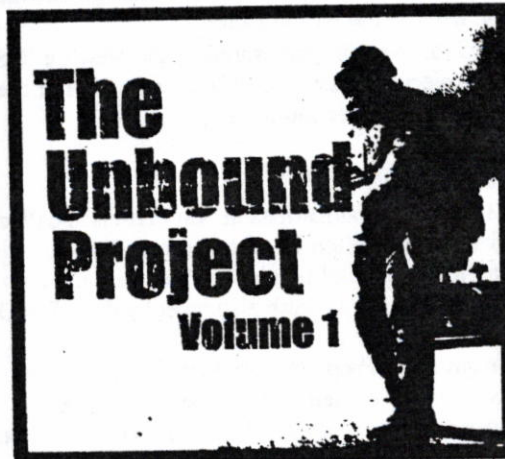
What does the Report Do?

- It makes it easier for the FBI to "wiretap suspected terrorist group[s] or individuals."
- Lift restrictions placed on CIA in 1995, allowing them to recruit "unsavory sources" when collecting counter-terrorist, intelligence. This means the government can use information and tips given from convicted felons, this can end in innocent people being targeted by the police.
- Step up detailed surveillance of students studying in the U.S. from other countries. Mandatory reports to the I.N.S. (the org. which keeps records on visitors to the U.S.) The college has to report whereabouts of



Music Review

THE UNBOUND PROJECT VOLUME 1



"This project is dedicated to Mumia Abu-Jamal, whose spirit of resistance and dedication to freedom for all oppressed people has inspired the gathering of voices and art." A portion of the profits goes to Mumia's defense fund and the Black United Fund.

"Life as we know it is about to change

I smell it within the air the weather is getting strange
 Drugged up sedated and numb from the pain
 The sickness in Amerikkka has spread to her brain
 She is no longer fit to make good decisions
 She is completely blind & void of any vision
 She parties hard and she keeps her consciousness mind in prison
 Therefore she is headed for the ultimate collision
 She can no longer hide the scars on her face
 The innocence now gone it's hard to replace
 She has no shame, no remorse or any grace she embraces the
 devil and she hates over race
 Ms. Amerikkka the beautiful the free
 Fallen within the cracks I wish that you could see
 She buried her misery within society
 It's obvious she has no regard for me." -Aceyalone- Ms.Amerikka

"This goes out to freedom fighters
 Graffiti writers, innocent lifers, grassroots organizers
 This goes out to single mothers, soledad brothers
 This goes out to cats raising them babies
 Young lovers of the revolution with solutions
 The ones who reacts sane when the world gets crazy
 Blaze one for the MOVE organization
 Ramona Africa & those who know that **truth is liberation**"
 Talib Kweli-The human element



Facing The Truth

By sista shiriki

As hue-mons, Facing The Truth is something we have a serious problem dealing with. Our first response is to become defensive about the truth, instead of excepting the truth, deal with it in an honest and progressive manner and move on. We can see death and destruction all around us, and rationalize it away as being something else. Facing the Truth can be like a sharp knife piercing our souls, however painful it maybe; we must face the truth about what is happening in the world around us. What is so dangerous about the United States Of Amerika (usa), is she presents herself as a democracy to the world, when in actuality it is a totalitarian state, always have been. Lets' take a look at the truth about what the US say it is concerning democracy and what the reality is. The US say in this kountry, we all have freedom of speech and expression, yet there are hundreds of Political Prisoners/Prisoner of War held here in US dungeons, because of their political views, activities and expressions which opposed US policy. The attack on Al-Amin(aka H."Rap" Brown) is an example of the US continued assault on activists & organizations.

The kop that was supposedly in a shoot-out with someone, said they wounded the person that escaped which was suppose to be Al-Amin. The truth is, when Al-Amin was arrested, he was not shot, yet the government continue to charge him with the murder

of the kop. The attack on supporters of Mumia Abu-jamal is another example of the assault on anyone who agitate, educate & organize against the propaganda of the US. Clark Kissinger is facing one (1) yr. supervised probation, which the so-called violation is the equivalent of a traffic ticket. Judy Kissinger (wife) was served two (2) subpoenas & must turnover ten (10) yrs. of financial records (i.e. taxes, bank statements, checks, credit card statements, loans, etc). Judy also have been summons to appear before a grand jury under the auspices of an investigation of a former employer. This is husband & wife, which means they have joint accounts, which is another way of gathering information on Clark without actually petitioning him. These tactics are nothing new, "COINTELPRO"! The US say it loves democracy, the truth is, the US aided the overthrow of the first democratic election in Haiti, support dictatorships of Nigeria, Israel, Peru, South Afrika, Chile, Columbia and the list goes on and on.

If the US was about democracy, how does she justify supporting dictatorships, where is the love for democracy? The truth is, there has "NEVER" been a democracy on the shores since the invaders arrived. The protesters of the WTO got a reality check about their so-called freedom of speech & expression. As more & more people in this kountry lose their jobs, you are going to see more & more discontent in the streets of the US. Then your beloved kountry is going to come full force out of the closet for the world to see. When Martial Law is implemented and a Tianmen Square or a MyLai Massacre take place on these shores, who will come to your rescue? The people of this kountry have sit back & watched kountry after kountry destoryed by US terrorist actions, without understanding, what goes around comes around! While this kountry continues to spend "BILLIONS" of our tax dollars on weapons of mass destruction against an invisible enemy, these same weapons will destroy the US from within.

Case and point, there is more nuclear waste stored on these shores than any kountry on the planet. Yet, the US bombs Iraq almost daily because of nuclear what? There are millions of tons of chemical weapons stored indifferent states here in the US. The derailment of a train carrying hazardous chemicals in Louisiana, Hussein didn't derail that train! What is going to happen to this nuclear waste when motha-nature strikes a blow with her earthquakes, tornados & hurricanes? Facing The Truth is painful. However, it must be faced, once armed with the truth, then what?

In Struggle,
sista shiriki

THE WALKOUTS

A few days before the vote, organizations across the state started to organizes statewide school walkouts:

- San Diego 700 students walked out of 15 schools and marched though the city streets.
- Los Angeles the same, 300 people marched over 6 miles through downtown LA, ending up protesting in front of the Hilton Hotel.
- Two days later in LA a march of over 500 sponsored by the New La Raza Left came from Aliso-Pico Projects in East LA, ending up in front of the county jail and shutting down the intersection to the jail.

PASSING OF 21

The day after Prop. 21 passed, organizations in San Francisco called on the people to assemble in the front of the Hilton Hotel to express their outrage. As the 300+ protesters entered the hotels sparkling lobby they were not only met by rich fur wearing guest of the hotel they were also meet by the S.F.P.D.. Who ended up arresting 175 young protesters.

One could say that the battle for Prop. 21 were lost. But again I ask that person take a deeper look as to what was gained at the same time. As Adam Gold of the C-Beyond organization put it "Prop. 21, it radicalized a lot of young people.". It seems to me that the passing of Prop. 21 isn't as amazing as the young people who stood up, put their differences aside and united to struggle against a system that clearly says : "the youth are expendable and money is all that counts."

It is has been clearly shown by the people ,organizations and the youth that united and came together against Prop.21 in California, that we the young people of the nation can and must act now directly in coming together to educate and organize our selves, our friends, families and communities to take on a system that commits crimes against it's people everyday of every week by putting money over the price of human lives. We can stop this brutality but it will not come by simply wishing all of these problems away.

STAND UP, UNITE, AND FIGHT FOR FREEDOM FOR ALL.



Education Not Incarceration

and money is all that counts. They become so angry and that energy is so contagious."

For example in resisting Prop. 21 V.O.S. (Voices in The Struggle) organized a rally at a police station in Concord (right outside of San Francisco) which drew over 4000 young people demanding "Schools Not Jails!" These new organizations knew that this movement of opposition could not be started overnight and so they started major campaigns of educating high school and junior high kids on just who would be targeted and jailed by Prop. 21. S.T.O.R.M. (Standing Together to Organize a Revolutionary Movement) did just that by attracting many young people by their radical politics and aggressive style. They set up study programs that included teach-ins, revolutionary theory on political prisoners, the prison industrial complex, Mumia Abu-Jamal, and how to fight for ethnic studies in their schools.

Other events to help spread awareness to a larger group of people from all ethnic backgrounds many organizations began to use the power of art to convey the messages of freedom, liberation and unity in opposing Prop. 21.

- The Third Eye Movement put on "Underside" an event that combined Hip-Hop and spoken word
- Black Folks against Prop. 21 a coalition put together by the group the Coup organized a series of "Guerrilla Hip Hop concerts" that educated and also registered voters to vote against Prop. 21
- The "It's Not a Battle It's a War" Hip Hop shows in Oakland brought hundreds, who after the show marched down to the county jail and demanded the release of prisoners. They succeeded and the Oakland Police freed three prisoners hoping to calm the crowd!
- Statewide banner drops were organized and occurred at the same time in Oakland, S.F., Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, and five other cities in C.A., ten cities in all. "We don't have money to buy billboards and air commercials to inform the public about this repressible measure. So we're combating Prop. 21 with our art skills"

TARGETING THE CORPARTE \$\$\$ BEHIND PROP.21

The next step was to stop the flow of support and money coming from corporations.

- San Francisco youth organized protest in front of Chevron Oil who contributed 50,000 and the Hilton Hotel Corp. demanding that the companies stop funding Prop. 21 and denounce it.
- When Chevron agreed to stop their funding and the Hilton refused members of the Third Eye Movement along with others decided to take over/occupy the lobby of the S.F. Hilton. While other youth org. statewide tied up fax and phone lines demanding that they stop their funding.
- Pacific Gas & Electric also gave over 25,000, which motivated members of the Youth United for Community Action to invite themselves to a luncheon with the CEO to express their outrage of PG&E's contribution.

THE WAR ON THE YOUTH & THE RESISTANCE ON THE FRONT LINES

By Mike McCormack

When the New Year brought champagne and fireworks, it also brought about two of the most terrifying & destructive events ever to take place here in the "Land of the Free." These two events went mostly unnoticed by TV, radio, newspaper and other media outlets.

These two events wouldn't have most people popping bottles of champagne or shooting off fireworks. These two American tragedies are not cause for a party or celebration at all. Unlike the bringing in of the new year, which comes only once a year, these two events stay with us and continue to become worse by the minute.

THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The first of these two tragedies took place in February when the population of the United States prisons reached a staggering 2 million men, women and children locked up behind U.S. bars. The second tragedy happened in March when California passed the Juvenile Crime Initiative, better known as Prop. 21. This new law will send more kids, as young as 13, not to "juvy halls" but to adult courts and prisons where they will be put into the general population of adult prisoners.

On that same day in February, the American people were not only uninformed that our prison population had reached 2 million, but the mass media also chose not to report just who was behind those bars. The media chooses not to inform the public that this prison population is mostly made up of minorities, 60% in fact. They failed to inform us that of that minority percentage in prison, 50% are African American* while the other 10% are Hispanic. (*Keep in mind the African American community makes up only 12% of U.S. pop.) The media also neglected to report that most prisoners were living in poverty before arrest, had little high school education and did not have good legal defense in court.

Now to one who may look at this and say, "Well the government should lock those people up, they are the people doing crimes." That person might want to take a deeper look as to how, why, and under what circumstances our nation chooses to double the size of its prison population in only 10 years.

Could the cry of politicians screaming "we must get tough on crime" and the need to "fight the war on drugs" have something to do with the unreal



explosion in the prison population? Maybe it's the "three strikes you're out" laws which send a person to jail for life if they commit 3 felonies? Or it may be the "mandatory minimum sentencing" that sends first time non-violent drug offenders to prison where they will receive no drug treatment and no rehabilitation. (This type of sentencing is responsible for 60% of the people in prisons today!)

Is it connected to Reagan's massive funding cuts of educational programs in U.S. prisons? How can we expect a prisoner to have the skills to get a job on the outside if there is no system to educate him on the inside? Could the current trend of states like California spending more money on prisons and prison construction than on educating the people have something to do with it? Since 1984 C.A. has built 21 prisons and only one university campus.

Or possibly it has something to do with the fact the prison labor is now a 9 billion dollar a year industry where inmates are paid only dollars a day. Now U.S. businesses aren't going across the border or the ocean for cheap labor, they're going to the next county for cheap slave labor. Or is it that the prison industry is the 4th largest industry in the U.S.?

Could it be that these minor details, forgotten by "our" mass media, somehow be related to the boom in the prison population? This concept, better known as the Prison Industrial Complex, is responsible for imprisoning more people than any other nation in the world. One should also keep in mind that this is taking place in America, where the levels of crime are the lowest in 30 years.

THE "JUVENILE JUSTICE BILL" -PROP. 21-

So keeping in mind the facts that all crime, even violent crime (rapes, murders, robberies) are down. Not only for adults but for juveniles too. So it may be hard to understand just why the "Golden State", California has just recently passed the harshest juvenile crime bill ever seen in this nation's history.

This new law the Juvenile Crime Initiative/Prop. 21 with its 43 pages of text, passed on March 7, 2000 it will:

- gives prosecutors (instead of judges the option to send juveniles as young as 14 years old to adult courts and prisons where they will be mixed with adults
- Allows the wiretapping of phones of suspected "gang" members households
- Defines a "gang" members an informal group of three or more people wearing certain clothing. Police will decide this.
- Sentences juveniles (as young as 14) to death for certain "gang" related crimes. At the same time expanding the death sentence, making it easier to kill juvenile offenders. Including a new no probation system for anyone who commits a crime while being a "gang" member. Even misdemeanor equals automatic prison time for all that are said to be "gang" members as said by police.
- Lowers felony vandalism like graffiti by from over 50,000 to 400, where now the minimum penalty is 1 year in jail and thousand of dollars of fines.

- Expands 3 strikes laws for juveniles, giving them longer sentences- For example if you receive 3 strikes as a juvenile you're in prison for 25 years to life.
- Makes new mandatory 6 month prison time for offenses like graffiti, truancy.(skipping school for a long period of time.
- Destroys laws given to juveniles to keep their juvenile record private and confidential. Now schools, media and employers have access to juvenile records making it very difficult for juveniles not to be labeled criminals and to get back into school and find a job

Is it possible that California forgot to look at the facts before passing this new law? The facts are that, juvenile arrest for felonies has gone down 30% between 1990-1998. And that also in that same time juvenile homicide has fallen by 61%. Or maybe it was not of major importance that that Prop. 21 would cost us the tax payers 1 billion in prison construction and another 330 million to just get off the ground? This is taking place in California, a state that currently spends more money on locking up the young than educating them.

THE RESISTANCE ON THE FRONT LINES

The young people of California that were forced to open their eyes to the oppressive nature of Prop.21 were driven to resist and oppose this war on the youth. This action kicked in by the youth is the one positive thing to come from this new law. The massive mobilization of high school and junior high kids being led primarily by people of color, stood up and organized not only in their neighborhoods and communities but across all racial and class lines across the state.

Cecilia Brennan, of the Los Angeles Youth Organizing Communities (Y.O.C.) saw the youth coming together to create change through direct action and stated "It was like a wake up call like when you get slapped in the face and you're galvanized into action. Young people were so directly affected by 21. They could see the economic realities of having jails instead of schools, of the prison industrial complex, which say youth are expendable

